



PRINCIPAL'S ASSEMBLY

Term 2 – 1 July 2022

Good Morning Students and Staff

As we finish Semester 1 and commence school holidays, it's a great time to celebrate the successes of our students and reflect on the highlights of Semester 1. It has been a busy period, often disrupted but we have got to the end.

This week, the Education Support Program showcased their latest Business and Enterprise (B&E) projects and presented gifts to both Dr Lucie McCrory an aromatic table mat (Christmas project) and me an apron (Fathers Day project).

The Business and Enterprise initiative is a wonderful skill and confidence builder for students who all contribute in some way be it card making, candle making, ironing bees wax wraps, infusing seeds into paper pulp to planting herbs into recycled tin cans.

In our community, our Education Support Program champions our Vision for Learning, Shine Through Discovery. The family spirit is exemplified by the relationships between our staff and students which really is the underpinning of our Marist charism. I have often wondered over the past 7 years about the very beginning of our support program – who was involved in which is now a significant part of our College. That question, in part, was answered this week when I attended the funeral of Sr Antoninus Campbell OP, Dominican Sister, who resided at St Anne's Convent in Doubleview. There may only be a handful of people in this gym who recall Sr Antoninus, but she has a wonderful story and I want to share it with you today:

In 1950 an 18 year old girl, called Teresa Campbell left Ireland with several other girls of similar age, and travelled to Australia as missionaries never to return home to Ireland, understanding that they would never see their families in Ireland again. In arriving in Western Australia she joined the Dominican Sisters of WA and took the name, Sister Mary Antoninus. After going to Teachers' Training College and qualifying as a teacher, Sr Antoninus taught in the country towns of Morawa and Dongara and then came to Perth, where she taught in some of our feeder schools, including St Johns and Holy Rosary. She then went on to teach at Siena, which became Newman Siena College and St Thomas Aquinas College in Bedford, which became Chisholm College.

In 1988, she returned to Newman Siena and realised that she wanted to serve the needs of students of diverse ability and in 1989 she set up the Special Education Unit at Newman Siena College through the support of Government grants.

Working with her team, Sister Antoninus wanted the unit to provide the students with tuition in the core subjects of English, Maths, Science and Humanities, as well as to provide them with life skills and entrepreneurial practice. The students were provided with all the opportunities of mainstream students, including a performance in the Regal Theatre, with Year 9 students.

Sister Antoninus assisted in the transition of students from the Doubleview Campus of Newman College to the Churchlands Campus in the 1990s and was instrumental in planning the operation of the centre before she retired.

Unfortunately, Sr Antoninus never got to see the wonderful facilities now provided for students in the Education Support Unit. However, she would have been delighted to see that her work continued.

Sr Antoninus' legacy is that she saw a need in our community and she acted upon it. 32 years on, she would never have envisaged perhaps the success that our Education Support Program has been to this community. The lives that have been changed and the hope that it provides for all of us about what is possible. Transforming lives and making a difference is the heart of our Marist charism. Our

Founder SMC sought to support dislocated youth and he acted on this which today sees Marist education in 80 countries across the world.

At our assembly today, each one of you have a capacity, the talent and the opportunity to be transformational. Sometimes we will never see the fruits of our efforts but if we commit to building the common good, support the person in need and placing Christ at the centre of our lives, we can collectively build a better community.

Today we give thanks for Sr Antoninus, we give thanks for our classroom teachers who day in, day out seek to transform the lives of the young people in their care.

In closing, I wish everyone a wonderful holiday.